

IN THE CLAIMS

The claim set is intended to reflect cancellation of claims 6-8 and 14-16, amendment of previously pending claims 1, 3-4, 9-13, and 19-21 and addition of new claims 23-33. The specific amendments to individual claims are detailed in the following marked up set of claims.

Please cancel claims 6-8 and 14-16.

Please amend the following claims.

- ✓1. (Currently amended) Apparatus comprising:
a biocompatible cylindrical introducer member with an outer wall and a hollow core, the cylindrical member having a longitudinal axis and an opening along a side; and
biocompatible means positioned in the introducer member for cutting tissue entering the opening as the means for cutting travels with respect to the opening without rotating.
- ✓2. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 1 further including means for coagulating blood in cut tissue so that the coagulation operation occurs immediately after or simultaneously with cutting the tissue.
- ✓3. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 1 ~~further~~ wherein the ~~means for cutting is a wire or ceramic or silicon or metal~~ means for cutting is a wire made from ceramic, silicon, or metal.
- ✓4. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 3 further including means for applying ultrasonic energy to the means for cutting wire to facilitate cutting.
- ✓5. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 1 further wherein the means for cutting further operates to coagulate blood in cut tissue.

✓9. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:
positioning in a body a biocompatible cylindrical introducer member with an outer wall and a hollow core, the cylindrical member having a longitudinal axis and an opening along a side; and

using a cutting member positioned in the introducer, cutting tissue entering the opening by moving the cutting member with respect to the opening without rotating the cutting member.

✓10. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 9 further including means for coagulating blood in cut tissue so that ~~the~~ a coagulation operation occurs immediately after or simultaneously with cutting the tissue.

✓11. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 9 ~~further~~ wherein a wire is used as a cutting member.

✓12. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 11 ~~3~~ further including applying ultrasonic energy to the wire to facilitate cutting.

✓13. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 9 ~~further~~ wherein the cutting member is also used to coagulate blood in cut tissue.

17. (Original) Apparatus comprising:


a biocompatible cylindrical introducer member with an outer wall and a hollow core, the cylindrical member having a longitudinal axis and an opening along a side;

a biocompatible cylindrical inner member with an outer wall and a hollow core, the cylindrical ^{inner} member having a longitudinal axis and an opening along a side and sized to fit inside the introducer member; and

means for cutting tissue entering the opening in the inner member as the means for cutting travels with respect to the opening in the inner member.

18. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 17 further including means for coagulating blood in cut tissue so that the coagulation operation occurs immediately after or simultaneously with cutting the tissue.
19. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 17 ~~further~~ wherein the means for cutting is a wire formed from ~~or~~ ceramic, ~~or~~ silicon, or metal.
20. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 19 further including means for applying ultrasonic energy to the means for cutting wire to facilitate cutting.
21. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 17 ~~further~~ wherein the means for cutting further operates to coagulate blood in cut tissue.
22. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 20 wherein the ultrasonic energy assists in coagulating blood.

Please add the following new claims.

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23. (New) Apparatus comprising:
a biocompatible cylindrical introducer member with an outer wall and a hollow core, the cylindrical member having a longitudinal axis and an opening along a side; and
a rod with a U-shaped end that supports a cutting wire positioned in the introducer member for cutting tissue entering the opening as the cutting wire travels with respect to the opening.
24. (New) Apparatus of claim 23 wherein the U-shaped end bends away from the longitudinal axis.
25. (New) Apparatus of claim 24 wherein the rod comprises a non-conductive material.

26. (New) Apparatus comprising:

a biocompatible cylindrical introducer member with an outer wall and a hollow core, the cylindrical member having a longitudinal axis and an opening along a side; and

a hollow tube slidable in the hollow core with a hollow tube opening about the size of the opening and a cutting wire positioned on one end of the hollow tube opening.

27. (New) Apparatus of claim 26 wherein the wire comprises a ceramic.

28. (New) Apparatus of claim 26 wherein the wire is to be energized at a first frequency to cut tissue during a first traverse of the opening and at a second frequency to coagulate the cut tissue during a second traverse of the opening.

29. (New) Apparatus comprising:

a biocompatible cylindrical introducer member with an outer wall and a hollow core, the cylindrical member having a longitudinal axis and an opening along a side; and

a hollow tube slidable in the hollow core with a hollow tube opening about the size of the opening and a cutting wire positioned at an end of the hollow tube and forming an edge of the hollow tube opening.

30. (New) Apparatus of claim 29 wherein the hollow tube comprises titanium.

31. (New) Apparatus of claim 29 wherein the cutting wire is to be energized at a first frequency to cut tissue during a first traverse of the opening and at a second frequency to coagulate the tissue during a second traverse of the opening.

32. (New) Apparatus comprising:

a biocompatible cylindrical introducer member with an outer wall and a hollow core, the cylindrical member having a longitudinal axis and an opening along a side; and

a hollow tube slidable in the hollow core including a cutting surface formed from or

a supported along an edge of a wall of the hollow tube such that rotating the hollow tube in the introducer member causes the cutting surface to move in a direction that is both in part parallel to the longitudinal axis and transverse to the longitudinal axis.

33. (New) Apparatus according to claim 32 further including means for coagulating blood that is positioned adjacent to and behind the cutting surface.

